

February 2017Department: **Corporate**

Team or Service Area Leading Assessment:

Coordinated by Head of Community Engagement and Equalities

Title of Policy/ Service or Function:

Council Budget 2017- 2018

Committee:

Executive

Lead Officer:

Steve Thompson / Andy Divall

STEP 1 - IDENTIFYING THE PURPOSE OR AIMS

1. What type of policy, service or function is this?

New/ proposed

2. What is the aim and purpose of the policy, service or function?

The proposals are intended to support the management of a large reduction in funding from the Government and other financial pressures which have led to a funding gap of approximately £19 million in 2017/18 and further pressures anticipated in future years, as set out in the Medium Term Financial Sustainability Strategy.

The purpose of this equality analysis is to:

- 1) Describe the work and decision making processes to assess potential impacts on key equality groups (protected characteristics) of the Budget proposals and highlight potential areas of adverse impact that could constitute discrimination.
- 2) Set out actions to ensure procedures are in place to continue to monitor and review the Equality impact of reduced funding and consequent service and staff reductions.

Background and legal context

The Council has a statutory responsibility under Equality Law, known as "Public Sector Duty " to examine and analyse the impacts on equality issues on all related decisions. This is set within the context of our overarching requirement under Equality law, as a designated public authority to have "due regard" to the need to –

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different (defined) groups

Council commitment to Equality and Diversity

The Council's priorities and commitments are published in two key publications a). The Equality Objectives ¹b) The Council Plan 2015-20

Both these documents describe the importance of this agenda to the Council and set out four overarching Objectives. The Council monitors and evaluates its work to advance all these objectives.

The Councils approach to Equality Analysis of the 2017-18 Budget proposals

The Council adopts a multi level approach to the equality analysis covering impact of the current Budget decisions arising from the Government's financial settlements.

This is in recognition of the complex effect on service users, staff, citizens and visitors of these decisions. This process involves a number of elements , key stages are :

September –November 16

- Initial service level proposals and scoping of equality issues. Focus is on the expected and known impact of service reduction proposals on key equality groups/ protected characteristics; this work is conducted by Senior Managers responsible for the services. The work is aimed at this first stage on identifying the scope of possible impacts, in order to inform Chief Officer Deliberation and Elected Members selection of proposals to take forward to consultation.
- Detailed advice, guidance and standardised Pro forma paperwork for all key decision makers involved in the budgetary decision process.
- Briefing sessions with all Directorate heads to explore possible scope and impact of proposals on key Equality issues.
- Concurrently, initial engagement sessions on the likely scope of the overall Budget position has been conducted with the Community wide Equality Engagement groups including the town wide Equalities Forum, Disability partnership, LGBT and Faith Forum. Further details on this exercise and the outcomes- in terms of agreed recommendations are summarised in section 10 of this report.

December 16 – January 17

- All budget related proposals with significant equality implications are identified to decision makers and an appropriate level of impact work is commissioned through data analysis and consultation with service users and others affected.

¹ The Council's Equality Objectives are :

Services – We will deliver services that are fair –measured by more people telling the Council they experience fair treatment by Council services

Staff – We will ensure that the workforce is more representative of the community the Council serves and equality and diversity is embedded in our staff culture

Decision making – We will involve people from diverse backgrounds in decision making at every level

Cohesion – We celebrate the growing diversity in Blackpool and increase respect and understanding for all

- Assessing staffing impacts. At this stage we are able to assess the effects of budget reductions on staff diversity issues. We do this by preparing a benchmark analysis of the current levels of workforce diversity for each of the key equality characteristics – Race, Gender, Disability, Age, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation, as at August 2016. This is then compared to the demographic profile of the pools of staff that have been placed at risk of redundancy through the specific service proposals, and any significant variances highlighted and investigated. This work is important for two reasons, firstly, to ensure there is no discrimination through the selection process and secondly, to track our process in working towards a workforce that better represents the community we serve.
- At appropriate stages, all the above is communicated and discussed with senior decision makers at Chief Officer and Elected Member levels. This in turn informs the final decisions which are included within the February Budget report.

3. Please outline any proposals being considered.

Funding and budgetary proposals as set out in the Executive report entitled General Fund Revenue Budget 2017/18 and in the report's appendices.

4. What outcomes do we want to achieve?

To manage the impact of a further large reduction in funding from the Government and other financial pressures which have led to a funding gap of approximately £19 million in 2017/18 and further pressures anticipated in future years as set out in the Medium Term Financial Sustainability Strategy.

5. Who is the policy, service or function intended to help/ benefit?

Many of the Council's services are specifically aimed at addressing social and economic inequalities and have a wide impact on inclusion and community cohesion in Blackpool.

6. Please summarise the main data/ research

Population Demographics

The population of Blackpoolⁱ is estimated at 139,580, with a larger proportion of residents aged 60+ compared to national age structure. Residents are mostly of White British ethnicity. Black and Minority Ethnic groups, including Irish and European residents, are estimated to make up 6% of the population approximately 8,500 people, compared with the estimated proportion for England of 20%

According to the most recent mid-year population estimates the population of Blackpool continues to gradually fall year on year. This goes against both the regional and national trend as the population of the North West and England are both seeing gradual increases each year.

7. Table 1: Population Demographics

Ageⁱⁱ	Blackpool	England
Aged 0-17 years	20.55%	21.3%
Aged 18-24 years	9.55%	10.4%
Aged 25-59 years	43.89%	45.3%
Aged 60+	26.02%	23.0%
Ethnicityⁱⁱⁱ		
White British	94%	80%
White Other e.g. European, Irish	3%	6%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	1%	2%
Asian/Asian British	2%	8%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	0.2%	3%
Other ethnic group	0.2%	1%
Tenure^{iv}		
Owned or Shared Ownership	62%	64%
Social Rented	11%	18%
Private Rented	26%	17%

The most recent data for Blackpool shows a higher percentage of residents who are described as separated or divorced, 12.5%, compared to 9.2% in the Northwest region and 8.7% in England & Wales.^v

Age

Blackpool has a slightly older demographic in comparison to the regional and national average with 19.2% of people over the age of 65 compared to 16.6% for the North West and 16.3% for England. The percentage of people who are of working age in Blackpool is below that of the regional and national averages with 63% of people aged between 16 and 64 compared to 64.6% in the North West and 64.8% for England. The number of people aged under 16 in Blackpool is also slightly lower.^{vi}

Race and Ethnicity

Blackpool has a predominantly white population with 94% of people describing themselves as White British compared with 80% for England. The Black and Asian community make up 3% of Blackpool's population, whilst another 3% of the population are of Eastern European origin.^{vii} According to the 2011 census 94.6% of people living in Blackpool were born in the United Kingdom as opposed to 91.8% regionally and 86.6% nationally. Of those born outside of the UK, the highest percentages were born in Europe (2.5%) and Asia (1.4%).

Ethnic Group	Blackpool %	England %	North West %
White British / other	96.6	85.5	90.2
Mixed ethnic groups	1.2	2.2	1.6
Asian	1.2	6.2	5.6
Black	0.2	3.4	1.3
Arab	0.1	0.4	0.3
Other	0.1	0.6	0.3

Gender and Transgender

Blackpool's population is composed of 49.3% men and 50.7% women (similar to national gender balance).

The census doesn't current include questions relating to Transgender. However, Blackpool has a significant LGBT entertainment industry and therefore the numbers of transgender people who visit and live in the town is also likely to be higher than the national average.

Religion or Belief / Faith Communities

The majority of the Blackpool population are Christian, with 67.2% of people describing themselves as Christian compared with 67.3% in the North West and 59.4% in England. Over 24% of people in Blackpool describe themselves as having no religion. This is similar to the national figure of 24.7%. However, the percentage of people with no religion in the North West is smaller with only 19.8%.

The remaining population is very small with only 0.7% of people describing themselves as Muslim, this equates to just over 1,000 people in Blackpool. This is significantly lower than the figures for both the North West and England with 5.1% and 5.0% respectively. Blackpool also has lower proportions of its population who describe themselves as Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh compared with the rest of the country. ^{viii}

Religion	Blackpool	North West	England
Christian	67.2	67.3	59.4
Buddhist	0.3	0.3	0.5
Hindu	0.2	0.5	1.5
Jewish	0.2	0.4	0.5
Muslim	0.7	5.1	5.0
Sikh	0.0	0.1	0.8
Other religion	0.4	0.3	0.4
No religion	24.5	19.8	24.7

Sexual orientation

There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that Blackpool has one of the largest gay and lesbian populations outside of the country's largest cities. The 2011 Census shows that 0.5% of the Blackpool population aged 16 and over was registered as being in a same sex civil partnership. The figure for England and Wales was 0.2%. In 2015/16 there were 524 marriages carried out in Blackpool, 9.5% of which were same sex civil ceremonies. ^{ix}

Health and Disability

Blackpool has poor life expectancy, with life expectancy for males the poorest in England at 74.7 years compared to 79.5 years. Life expectancy for females is similarly poor, at 79.9 years, compared to 83.2 years for England – joint second with Manchester, with Middlesbrough being the lowest at 79.8^x. The biggest contributors for both men and women are circulatory diseases, digestive diseases including cirrhosis, and respiratory disease. These three areas contribute over half of the overall life expectancy gap in Blackpool. Lung Cancer is also a significant contributor to Female Life Expectancy^{xi}.

A high proportion of residents describe their health as “not good” and state that they have a “limiting long term illness”. 8.2% of working aged people in Blackpool is classed as long-term sick and economically inactive. This is a higher percentage of people compared with both the North West and England which have 6.5% and 4.7% respectively.^{xii}

Substance and Alcohol misuse is considered high, with alcohol-related death the joint highest, alongside Manchester, in England for males^{xiii} (cirrhosis being one of the major drivers of the life expectancy gap). Admissions to hospital in Blackpool for alcohol related conditions are much more prevalent than the regional and national average. With 1223 per 100,000 compared to 741 in the North West and 641 in England.^{xiv} Further estimates suggest that the prevalence of problematic heroin and/or crack cocaine use in Blackpool was 21.89 per 1,000 populations^{xv}. Blackpool has the highest drug prevalence rate across the region, and is within the top ten nationally.

The number of people registered with severe long-term mental health problems and who are actively accessing treatment is higher than the regional and national average. Blackpool has the fourth highest rate of male suicide in England with 27.4 per 100,000 cases per year.^{xvi}

While not directly a health damaging issue, teenage Pregnancy rates in under-18s are the 10th highest in England & Wales. In addition, Blackpool has a lower proportion of teenage pregnancies leading to abortion (43%) compared to England & Wales (51%).^{xvii} This implies a greater relative proportion of teenagers go on to become parents. Teenage conceptions have associated risks for both parent and child’s health and social wellbeing.

The most recent figures show that over a hundred people in Blackpool are registered blind with nearly 200 registered as having sight impairment. Nearly 200 people are registered deaf or have a hearing impairment. According to the DfE most children with hearing and visual impairments are educated within the mainstream school system and do not generally attend special schools^{xviii}. In March 2016, there were a total of 390 children or young people (aged 0-24) with a statement of SEN (Special Educational Needs), and 190 EHC (Education, Health and Care) plans. This is around 1.4% of the Blackpool 0-24 population and slightly lower than the England (1.5%) and North West (1.6%). The majority of children with an EHC plan or Statement are of secondary school age with a strong peak in statements for 15-16 year olds. Studies have shown that SEN is more prevalent among boys than girls. This is reflected in the figures for Blackpool; 67% of all SEN pupils are boys compared to 33% girls. The most accepted explanation for this is the difference in prevalence of disabilities for example; boys are five more times likely to be diagnosed with Autism than girls. It may also be related to differences in child development with boys generally maturing at a slower rate than girls.

When looking at the number of children who require SEN support (children identified as having Special Educational Need but who do not have a statement or EHC plans) Blackpool supports around 2,813 children. This is around 14.7% of all pupils in Blackpool, higher than England (12.7%) and the North West (12.7%). This indicates that Blackpool has higher levels of SEN but that a lower proportion of these receive statements or EHC plans.

Learning Disabilities

The Blackpool population has a higher prevalence of learning disabilities compared to the national figure. In Blackpool 0.9% of the total population claim Disability Living Allowance for learning disabilities whilst the figure is only 0.07% for the whole of England.^{xix} There are relatively few children with severe learning difficulties in the mainstream education system; 26% of all special school SEN pupils have severe learning disabilities. In addition a large proportion (23%) of special school SEN pupils are considered autistic.^{xx}

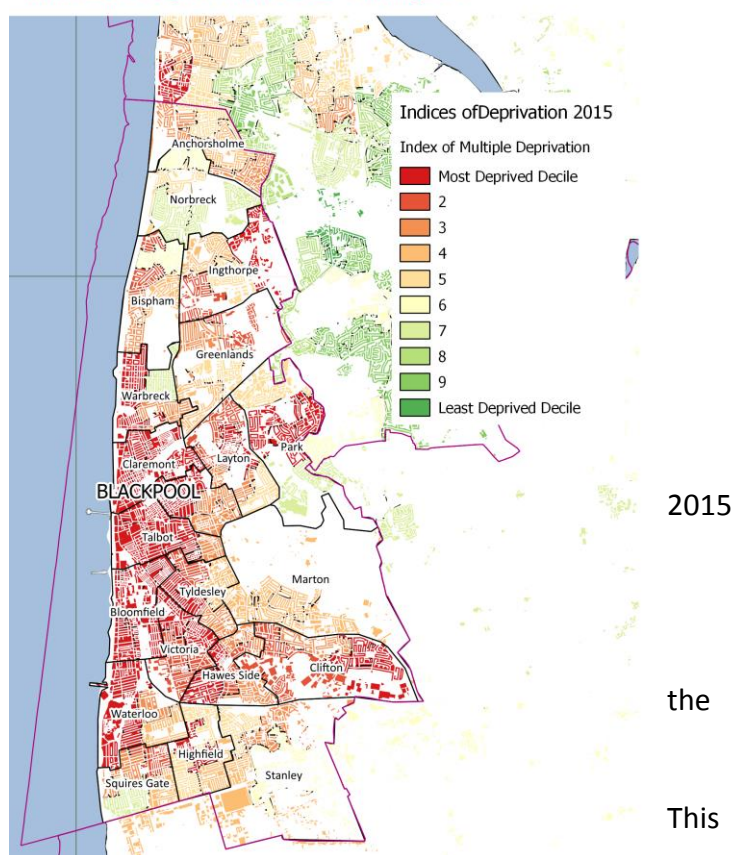
People with learning disabilities and autism are one of the most excluded groups in the community and more likely to be living in poverty than the general population, partially because they are less likely to be in paid employment. People with learning disabilities are at increased risk of many health conditions compared to the general population. Common problems include respiratory diseases, sensory impairment, gastrointestinal cancer, anxiety and depression and dementia.

Poverty and Deprivation

Blackpool has a large proportion of residents living in deprived areas and is currently ranked the most deprived authority in England under the Indices of Deprivation 2015, a higher rank than in 2010, (6th) 2007 (12th) and 2004 (24th), based on the 'rank of average scores' measure. Additionally, in the 2010 and Indices, Blackpool ranked 1st for the concentration of deprivation within the town.

Poverty is a significant factor in Blackpool. In 2014, Blackpool was ranked 11th worst local authority for child poverty with 31.1% of children in Blackpool living in low income families. This is compared to an average of 19.9% of all children in England. Further analysis highlights that 62.8% of children in poverty live in lone parent families

Indices of Deprivation 2015 - Blackpool



7. What are the impacts or effects for Key Protected Characteristics?

General impacts covering protected characteristics

In drawing together the detailed proposals the authority has been mindful of the need to assess the Equality impact and wherever possible, mitigate the adverse effects on service provision .

Although the scale and continuing patterns of cuts have made it impossible to protect all services to the most vulnerable children and adults in our community, we have made these decisions having regard to the impact this will have on people who share protected characteristics, and have tried to mitigate and reduce impact, wherever we can.

The collective effects of combined service cuts alongside other government initiatives such as welfare reform are difficult to judge at this stage and will only really become apparent over time. The opportunity for these issues to be explored further through consultation and engagement with key community groups and service providers will be important in the year ahead.

The effect of the Budget in respect of the Council's workforce diversity will continue to be measured and assessed for the impact on the overall balance of employees, compared with the Blackpool population. This will help us to assess progress towards our target of becoming an employer that better reflects the composition of the community we serve.

Specific impacts

As the budget report explains, the approach this year has been based on securing the Council's sustainability over the next 6 years and as a result a new Medium-Term Financial Sustainability Strategy (MTFSS) has been developed covering the period 2016 to 2022.

The plan makes clear that service reductions and cuts were the last resort and only considered after the following reviews had been exhausted:

How we manage our money, including debt, reserves and capital
How we generate income, including fees and charges, business loans and investments
How we negotiate contracts to get best value from the market place
Preventative measures to reduce demand on services
How we work together with our partners and companies

Some of the proposals in these themes do impact on equality issues and in some areas direct services are significantly affected within the Council's various departments. These equality issues and impacts have been – and will continue to be - explored in detailed Equality Analysis, which has in turn informed the decision making process. This work has particularly focused on proposed changes / reductions in the following areas :

- Street lighting
- Income and fees and charges
- Library books
- Commissioning services
- Housing support
- Channel shift
- Concessionary travel
- Bus routes
- SEN transport
- Families in need

- Pupal welfare
- Structural reforms
- Dealing with Vacancies

Relationships between or within communities (cohesion)

The continued reduction in Council funding for deprived communities across much of Blackpool will have an inevitable effect on services and support for these neighbourhoods, and therefore add to the pressures and tensions within these areas. The Council will keep a close dialogue with key community groups and leaders, as well as engagement through our Fairness Commission and Equality forums - to monitor this, and react if / when required.

The Council will also continue to fulfil obligations and responsibilities in recording and monitoring Hate Crime and related incidents.

Monitoring the levels and patterns of Hate Crime will be a very important means of tracing the effects on community tensions of the reductions in the wider public sector spend in Blackpool in the period ahead.

8. What do you know about how the proposals could impact on levels of socio –economic inequality, in particular poverty?

Given the widespread and deep levels of deprivation in Blackpool, outlined above, the proposals have the potential to have an impact on groups and individuals who may be vulnerable directly as a result of their protected characteristics or whose vulnerability is increased by their protected characteristics. These issues have been considered by decision makers through this process.

9. What can be done to improve the policy, service, function or any proposals in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or effects identified?

Significant budget reductions on this scale, by their very nature, have an unavoidable adverse impact on service delivery and people. However, the decisions on individual service areas, as far as possible, have been made with regard to the impact on particular vulnerable groups and people sharing protected characteristics.

The impact on staff sharing protected characteristics will also be equality monitored to ensure, wherever particular groups do not suffer disproportional adverse impact due to this.

In due course, further Equality engagement will be important as the effect of combined service cuts are difficult to measure at this stage and will only really become apparent over time. The budget reductions over the last few years are completely unprecedented in scale and the opportunity for these issues to be explored further through consultation and engagement with key community groups and service providers will be important in the year ahead.

The effect of the reduction in budget in respect of the workforce diversity will be measured and assessed and the long term impact on the staffing profile in respect of the overall balance of the workforce will be tracked

10. Consultation

Consultation meetings on the broad budget position facing the Council have been undertaken with the community equality groups during 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 and 2015/16 budget cycles. The Council's Director of Resources or his representative has personally attended and briefed a number of these groups.

Wider communication has also taken place via the Council's extensive corporate communication methods – which include web site, social media, media briefings & press statements and interviews.

Once specific proposals were published in December 2016, detailed consultations with all affected stakeholders-amongst them staff, service users and communities of interest / equality groups –have taken place. The outcomes of these consultations have been considered by key decision makers, and accordingly have informed the final proposals contained in the budget.

Consultation with the Trades Unions with regards to staffing issues has been embedded into normal working practices and has also met all formal consultation requirements.

In addition to the above, for this year the Council has also undertake an extensive outreach exercise with a wide range of community , equality and third sector groups and organisations during September – November 2016.

This, together with a commissioned opinion research exercise has further helped to inform the Council's direction and decision making on this year's budget.

Below are the report's conclusions and recommendations. The full report including the feedback from sections held with the Community Equality groups is amended to this report.

Partnership working between the Council and Third Sector can and needed to be enhanced and improved in order to realise the ambitions for a sustainable and resilience community for Blackpool. In the past, relationships were impeded by a disconnect due to very different cultures and a perceived lack of openness and communication.

More collaborative working needed to be built both within the highly diverse groups that make up the Third sector and between the sector and the Council / other agencies.

Recommendations

- 1. To encourage the nurturing of genuine dialogue and trust it is vitally important for the Council to feedback on each of the specific proposals, within a reasonable timeframe. It is therefore suggested that this report is shared with relevant Cabinet Members, before recommended responses are taken back to the Council Executive, and then communicated to these groups in the New Year, once the Budget has been approved.*
- 2. To consider the developing this exercise into a more permanent cycle of strategic engagement with the sector, through piloting a thematic approach to meetings.*

ACTION PLAN

Please outline your proposed action plan below.

Issues/ adverse impact identified	Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact	Targets/Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments
1. Need for continued dialogue and engagement with vulnerable groups and providers on the long term impact of budgetary reductions	To maintain current support for structures of community engagement in equality and diversity	To engage key groups over the long term impact of service reductions on specific Equality issues in Blackpool	On going throughout 2017.	Director of Resources Head of Community Engagement/ Equalities	
2. Need for a full examination of the effect of service reduction on workforce diversity and continued dialogue and engagement with staff over budgetary reductions in future years	To conduct equality monitoring on staff at risk of redundancy and take appropriate action if adverse impacts are identified To track staff equality monitoring data to ensure an accurate picture of current workforce diversity.	To mitigate any disproportional effect on staff who share protected characteristics, and monitor the target of becoming a more diverse employer.	Within current and any future redundancy processes	Head of HR/OD Head of Community Engagement/Equalities	
3. Need for detailed examination of the effect of service reductions on specific service users and continued dialogue/ engagement with them over budgetary reductions in future years	To conduct equality analysis as part of service redesign/commissioning review proposals and take appropriate action if possible to mitigate adverse impacts are identified	To mitigate any disproportionate effect on service users who share protected characteristics if possible, and monitor the outcome of changes.	Within current and any future budget reduction exercises	Relevant Chief Officers	

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW

Please outline your arrangements for future monitoring and review below.

Agreed action	Monitoring arrangements	Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments
1. To maintain current support for structures of service user and provider engagement.	To be built into the Directorate Business planning and Performance review processes	2017 and ongoing	Chief Officers Head of CEE	
2. To conduct equality monitoring on staff at risk of redundancy and take appropriate action if adverse impacts are identified To track staff equality monitoring data to ensure an accurate picture of current workforce diversity.	To be built into the Directorate Business planning and Performance review processes	2017 and ongoing	Head of HR Head of CEE	
3. Where appropriate to conduct equality monitoring on service changes and take appropriate action if adverse impacts are identified	To be built into the Directorate Business planning and Performance review processes	2017 and ongoing	Relevant Chief Officers	

ⁱ ONS Mid-Year Population estimates 2015

ⁱⁱ ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2015

ⁱⁱⁱ ONS Census 2011 Ethnicity, 2011

^{iv} ONS Census 2011 Tenure, 2011

^v ONS Census 2011 Living Arrangements, 2011

^{vi} ONS Census 2011, Age, 2011

^{vii} ONS Census 2011 Ethnicity, 2011

^{viii} ONS Census, Religion, 2011

^{ix} Blackpool Registrars, 2016

^x ONS Life Expectancy, 2012-14

^{xi} Public Health England –2009-11

^{xii} ONS, Annual Population Survey, April 2015 – March 2016

^{xiii} NWPHE Local Alcohol Profiles 2012 - 14

^{xiv} Calculated by Public Health England: Health and Social Care Information Centre - Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) and Office for National Statistics (ONS) - Mid Year Population Estimates. 2014 – 15.

^{xv} Blackpool Drug Health Needs Assessment 2014

^{xvi} Public Health England (based on ONS source data) 2012 - 14

^{xvii} Public Health England – 2014

^{xviii} Department for Education, SEN and EHC Plans England, 2015

^{xix} ONS, DLA by condition, February 2016

^{xx} Department for Education, SEN and EHC Plans England, 2015